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SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

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DEA BRASILIA FOR: ACTING CA HALL
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DEA QUITO FOR: CA HUDSON
DEA PANAMA CITY FOR: CA SNYDER

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: ANDEAN NORTHERN BORDER CONFERENCE

1. Peruvian National Police (PNP) successfully sponsored with the assistance of the Lima Country Office (LCO) the Andean Northern Border Strategy Conference from Feb. 22-24, 2005. This conference centered on Counter-narcotics strategy on Amazonas Border countries and included National Police Director Generals from Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Panama, Peru and Venezuela.

2. Presentations and discussions by each country centered on counter drug trends, insurgent situations and narcotic activities along the Amazonas. Countries presented the structure and efficiency of their anti-drug units in these areas as well as the trafficking models concerning major narcotics and arms traffickers. Major topics discussed included narco-terrorism, drug trafficking trends and methods, and counter-drug strategy.

3. Narco-terrorism.

A. All countries reported the presence of the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC) outside of Colombia. Due to increased activities of the Colombian National Police (CNP) and the Colombian military forces, it appears that the FARC is establishing itself in other countries to continue their narcotics trafficking related activities. Of particular interest, was the impact of forced coca cultivation of Peruvian coca farmers and native groups by the FARC. The PNP provided that several indigenous groups in the jungle areas of the Loreto Department in Peru had reported they were cultivating sizeable crops as a result of threats from the FARC. Since these groups felt defenseless due to the lack of Peruvian law enforcement or military presence in their areas, they would concede to these demands. These indigenous groups have also reported missing persons and increased violence associated with drug trafficking in their areas.

B. Separately, it was also reported by other countries that arms trafficking and drug transportation was also being conducted within their boundaries by the FARC and other insurgent and/or paramilitary groups.

C. Due to ease of border crossing and lack of law enforcement or military deterrent, it has been reported that FARC units would regularly cross Amazonas borders into Brazil, Ecuador and Peru to escape detection by Colombia military and law enforcement units. It has been reported that other insurgent organizations are also operating in these areas with lack of regard for law enforcement.

D. Although national police agencies from Brazil, Ecuador and Peru have affected limited successes against the FARC as evidenced by significant arrests of FARC leaders in 2004, the danger to law enforcement personnel by insurgent forces along the Amazonas border continues.

4. Drug trafficking trends and methods.

A. All countries reported continued trafficking through maritime ports and airports. Outside of the common methods of smuggling via passenger mules, luggage and cargo, Colombia National Police reported finding live animals (chickens, dogs, etc.,) fruits and interior structure of cars/technical equipment were being packed (internally) with cocaine. Brazil reported increased evidence of clandestine airstrips and river operations approximate to its borders with Colombia and Peru. Peru reported an increase in bulk seizures all destined for Pacific Coastal Maritime Exportation.

B. Colombia continued to report strong evidence of significant loads of heroin and cocaine being transported through Ecuador, a major transit country, via maritime and air transportation to destinations in U.S., Mexico and Europe. It was reported by Peru that Colombian and Mexican drug traffickers were maintaining a strong influence in the Amazonas regions. It was surprisingly reported that major cartels did not run or have an overwhelming presence in these

regions, but that most trafficking operations were run by local "clan" or "family-oriented" organizations.

15. Counter-Drug Strategies.

All countries concurred that joint transnational cooperation along these borders is the key to successful ventures against the drug traffickers and narco-terrorism. Several countries reported successful arrests and operations through cooperative efforts. Included in these efforts: (1) Colombia and Ecuador reported that joint efforts between their countries had led to the successful arrest and detention of FARC Commander, Simon Trinidad. (2) Colombia and Peru also worked together in the successful arrest of FARC leader Gonzalo Guerra Siquihba AKA El Gusano. In addition, it was pointed out that Operation Seis Fronteras provides an excellent example of regional shared collective interdiction efforts against chemical trafficking organizations. Brazil provided a multi-faceted strategy in which different cooperative strategies were applied to each of its borders including Peru, Colombia and Suriname.

16. Strategy Discussions and La Acta (The Agreement).

1A. Throughout discussions, each country consistently pointed out the major weaknesses that continue to plague them and prevent significant operations towards disruption and/or dismantlement of drug trafficking organizations and reducing the presence of narco-terrorist organizations operating in the Amazonas region. Major weaknesses include:

- Limited exchange of information and intelligence.
- No joint/regional operating or agreement against any particular criminal organization.
- Police efforts are considered ineffective without political and socio-economic support.

The last weakness was echoed by all participants and simply stated that efforts by the police forces of each nation were ineffective as drug trafficking, money laundering and other related crimes had risen to the rank of transnational crimes and weighed serious economic and political consequences. Subsequently, the police directors from each participant country agreed to commit support for the following major initiatives:

- Encouraging further support by each country,s government against illicit drug trafficking and effect policies to support police operations and legal actions.
- Create a multinational police committee to fight against drug trafficking, terrorism and related crimes. This committee will be compromised of representatives from Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Panama, Peru and Venezuela and responsible for initiating a plan of action against these activities in the Amazonas:
- Development of joint interdiction operations
- Asset laundering. Exchange Police and operational/financial intelligence issues concerning assets resulting from organized crime
- Anti-drug and anti-terrorism intelligence sharing

17. Participant countries agreed to meet in Brasilia, Brazil in May 2005 to discuss the strategic management chart, which contains the goals and activities of La Acta.

Respective offices with questions concerning this conference are requested to contact Acting ARD Frank S. Franco or S/A Don Garrett at 301-985-9329 or 511-618-2475.
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